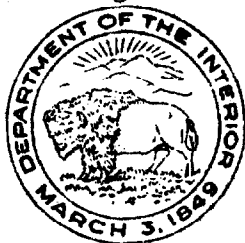


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SUMMER QUARTER MARKS PEAK OF FISH PRODUCTION AND ADVENT OF NEW CANNED SUPPLIES

The third quarter--peak production period for American fisheries--will see a banner catch of halibut, a good seasonal take of shrimp, opening of the oyster season, and the marketing of increasing supplies of canned tuna, Alaska salmon and Maine sardines, according to the Commercial Fisheries Outlook for July, August and September, issued today by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Outlook points out that already the tuna catch is 50 percent above the midyear mark of 1955 and that the pack is up 44 percent. It shows that the halibut fishermen are making catches which should bring the halibut harvest this year somewhat above that of last year. It points out also that while shrimping has been at a seasonal low, it is now going into a period of peak production and unless adverse weather conditions hamper the fishermen the shrimp catch this year should be about normal.

The tuna industry is already making plans to market its big catch and pack. A big promotional campaign, in which the industry and the Fish and Wildlife Service will join forces, has been planned and the period September 13-22 has been designated as National Tuna Week.

The new pack of Alaska salmon will make its appearance on the American market in mid-August. Indications are that the total salmon pack this year will be about the same as that of 1955 which was below average. Landings of Columbia River and Alaska king (chinook) salmon have met with a ready market, whether the salmon was fresh or frozen. The early Columbia River chinook pack was quickly sold.

The Maine sardine industry got off to a slow start in June but most of the activity in that fishery is in this summer quarter. Historically the even-numbered years have been the big productive periods. Production of California sardines will begin in the fourth quarter.

Groundfish landings are expected to maintain the high level of the second quarter, although there will be a reduction in the catch of cod. Haddock stocks are about 25 percent greater than they were a year ago. Ocean perch landings which have been down somewhat are expected to increase.

Freshwater landings have passed their seasonal peak.

Soft clam production was low in Maine but surf clams were 50 percent above the 1955 mark in the Middle Atlantic States. Hard crabs are plentiful in the Gulf and production is expected to reach a seasonal peak in Chesapeake Bay during this quarter. Oyster season on the Atlantic Coast opens in September. Sea scallops will reach a production peak in July and August.

There will be increases in the output of fish oil and fish meal and the year's output of each is expected to be about the same as that of last year, which set a record high.

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